

# Influence of Agricultural Training Services on Livelihoods of Women Self-help Groups in Kapseret Constituency in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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## Abstract

In the recent decades, women have been in the centre of extreme poverty in most developing countries. As such, they have had limited economic empowerment within their communities, an issue that has greatly weakened development. To counter this, women have renewed their interest in development by forming self-help groups in hope of enhancing their livelihoods. These groups have registered tremendous success in ensuring women get enough capacity through agricultural training services to provide for themselves and their households. Unfortunately, some of the women self-help groups are registering minimal development, poor yields and performance that threatens affects their women sustainable livelihood. This study purposed to determine how agricultural training services influence livelihood of women self-help groups in Kapseret Constituency in Uasin Gishu County. The study employed descriptive research design with a target population of 3500 women from 143 women groups within Kapseret constituency. Using Yamane 1967 formulae a sample size 380 respondents were selected using simple random sampling and data collected using self-administered questionnaires. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages and frequencies) while inferential statistics were ran using spearman's rank order correlation through SPSS version 21.0. Findings from the study revealed that there was agricultural training livelihood of women self-help group. The study recommends awareness and sensitization of women on importance of joining self-help groups that ensures improved livelihoods.

**Keywords:** Agricultural training services; women self-help groups; livelihoods.

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## **1. Introduction**

Women around the world are resilient and resourceful economic agents, overcoming persistent, gender-based barriers to advance the health, education, and economic survival of their families. Every day, women demonstrate they can participate in agricultural practices out of very little capital, create networks to maximize limited resources, and shoulder the care-taking responsibilities of their families. Traditionally women played a major role in food production and food preparation [1]. However, their involvement in agricultural practices is not so extensive, due to less recognition of women's economic power and status in the society, hence, little impact on their livelihoods most rural women living in the rural peripheries throughout the world shoulder the burden of the world's poverty, particularly in the Least Developed Countries and sub-Saharan Africa [2]. Their contribution to local and community development is significant, but everywhere rural women are in a minority in decision-making and planning. This is in part due to women's multiple roles and workload, but it is also due to the persistence of traditional views about women's and men's roles in society [1]. Despite women involvement in agricultural practices, in Kenya, women self-help groups have faced numerous challenges ranging from financial to leadership. Despite these challenges women self-help groups those supported by NGOs like One Acre Fund face, they have been recommended as the best tools for rural development [3]. However, due to the less recognition in both interventions and academic platforms, there has been dearth knowledge on how women self-help groups practicing agriculture can be empowered for socio-economic development. It is against this background that this study examines the influence of agricultural practices on livelihood of women self-help groups in Kapseret Constituency, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

### ***1.1. Statement of the problem***

Women self-help groups practicing agriculture have played a dominant role in the rural economy, as well as adding to their growing recognition of women's contributions in their livelihoods. However, this has not translated into significantly women's improved access to resources or increased decision-making powers, neither has the dynamism that women display in the economic, cultural and social lives of their communities through their groups and informal networks been channeled into creating new models of participation and leadership. Various studies such as [4], have focused mostly on the broader concept of women groups and rural development, with little focus on the influence of agricultural practices on the livelihoods of women self-help groups, this has led to women self-help groups' practicing agricultural activities becoming invisible to the realm of national development.

### ***1.2. Objective of the study***

To establish the influence of agricultural training practices on the livelihood of women self-help groups in Wareng' Sub-county, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

## **2. Materials and methods**

### ***2.1. Secondary information***

Across the globe, women make up a large part of agricultural labor. In Sub-Saharan Africa, they represent 40 %

of the agricultural labor force. In some developing countries, their contributions exceed 50%. Closing the gender gap could increase yields on women-run farms by 20-30%. However, women's limited access to education, training opportunities and extension services subject them into a subordinate role, to the detriment of their own development and that of society as a whole [5]. In India, the well known participatory approach to extension is the farmer field school which first emerged in the late 1980s in Asia. Farmer field schools move away from the top-down style of training women self help groups to make learning more farmer-led and inclusive, which can be a way of reaching more women farmers. Research has shown that farmer field schools are very effective at reaching women self groups as well as men. Even so, there are still some practical barriers to women's attendance, which are easily overlooked. To enhance the capacity of women farmers to solve their farming problems is to establish women-only villager experimentation groups. Through these groups, women farmers gained more opportunities to work together, share their experiences, express their opinions and also train new groups. Women account for 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries on average but only receive about 5% of training and advisory services, known as agricultural extension [6]. This makes them less productive than men, and closing that gap could reduce the number of undernourished people in the world by 12-17%. The members of SHGs need regular training on managerial and technical aspects of agricultural practices. A study by International Food Policy Research Institute indicates that many people assume that farmers are men. In fact, women are often either household heads themselves or by default because their husbands are working in cities or mines. But traditionally the focus has been on men and technology. This means that where extension services and trainings are delivered based on land ownership, women farmers are more likely to be passed over. In the Republic of Kyrgyzstan women are majority (92%) of rural self help groups, which the government trains in sustainable agriculture practices and vegetable conservation as well as in business skills enabling them to improve nutrition of family as well as increase income. As part of the Kenyan government's contribution to increased food production, in the year 2000, through the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) came up with NALEP, an intervention to address food insecurity. NALEP in particular created, strengthened and enhanced the innovative and productive capacities of the smallholder rural farmers to attain self-sufficiency levels in food security requirements. However, it did not reach out all the farmers as envisioned in their strategic plan. In Kenya, women and men have been trained on new agricultural technologies and agri-business development. However, the majority of women have been satisfied with these extension services and their earnings from agriculture activities have increased by 35% [4]. A study by [3] attempted to determine the impact of adult education on the agricultural productivity of small scale female maize farmers in Potiskum Local Government Area of Yobe State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study included; describe the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, to compare the output and income of female maize farmers participating in adult education programme and non-participants in the study area. The study was conducted using structured questionnaires administered on 60 female maize participants and 60 non-participants randomly selected. The result showed that both groups are young and energetic for farm work. Both groups are also experience with large household to provide farm labour. The regression analysis showed that age, education, experience and extension contacts were significantly related to output. There was statistical difference between the output and income of participant and non-participants. The study concluded that education positively impacted on the agricultural productivity of small scale female maize farmers in the study area. The study recommended that a well articulated training should be implemented for rural female farmers, female farmers

should be encouraged to participate in adult education schemes using incentives and government agricultural policies should be in tandem with the paradigm shift on gender amongst others [6]. A study on ‘the impact of education on agricultural productivity of small scale rural female maize farmers in Potiskum local government, Yobe state in Nigeria’ [6]. This study supports the current study in the call for education among the women farmers however there is still a gap on how training and education promotes women groups practicing farming. Despite women group’s participation in agricultural activities to improve their livelihoods, not much has been documented on the same, livestock production and management continues to be a household activity with flexible arrangements of work between women and men. Women's access to information and training in modern livestock management continue to be limited and even indirect, lowering women’s involvement and efficiency [7].

## 2.2. Methodology

The research problem was studied through the use of a descriptive survey research design. Since it is carefully structured to ensure complete description of the situation, making sure that there is minimum bias in the collection of data and to reduce errors in interpreting the data collected [8]. The target population was 7600 women respondents. The target population was drawn from 143 women self-help group in Kapseret Constituency. The information was found from Ministry of sports, culture and heritage, department of Social Service, in Uasin Gishu County. (2013). The sample size of the study was 380 according to Yamane’s (1967) formula, which entailed 7 Group Chairpersons and 373 member of the women self help groups. The study did employ simple random sampling (For respondents) and purposive sampling for Group chairpersons.

**Table 1:** The Sampling Procedure

Name	Target Population	Sample size from Each Village
Group Chairpersons	143	7
Members	7457	373
Total	7600	380

### Source: Wareng’ Sub-county Information Office

The questionnaire schedule was used to gather information from the selected persons about the actual situation on the ground. Primary data were obtained using questionnaires that were self administered to the Women self help groups practicing agricultural. Data for this study were collected between the months of April and June 2016. The researcher visited the women self help groups and the chairpersons in the process of administering questionnaires. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires then coded and entered into the Statistical Analysis Software - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and analyzed using inferential and descriptively statistics. Descriptive Statistics (Frequencies and percentages) obtained were used to describe the respondent’s perception of issues raised during data collection so as to answer the research questions. Inferential statistics (Hypothesis and spearman rank order correlation) were used to interprets relationship between

Agricultural practices and livelihood of women self-help group [9]. During hypothesis testing variable values above or below p (0.00) are rejected or accepted.

### 3. Results

A total of 380 questionnaires were sent out to the respondents to fill. Of these questionnaires, 346 were returned for analysis. The returned 346 questionnaires accounted for 91.1% response rate. A response rate of 70% and above is adequate [9] and thus a response rate of 91.1% was acceptable for data analysis. majority 172(49.7%) of the respondents had primary level of education, 148(42.8%) had secondary level, 23(6.6%) had tertiary level of education and only 3(0.9%) of the respondents having university education. This implies that the members of self-help group had basic qualification to participate in agricultural activities. Besides, majority 242(69.9%) of the respondents were protestants, 90(26.0%) were Catholics, 12(3.5%) were Muslims and only 2(0.6%) of the respondents having no religion. Similarly, majority 149(43.1%) of the respondents were of the ages between 29 to 38 years, 93(26.9%) were between 18-28 years and 91(26.3%) were between 39-58 years and only 13(3.8%) respondent were above 58 years. Lastly, majority 146(42.2%) of the respondents headed the household by the wife, 98(28.3%) indicated that their household were headed by their mothers, 93(26.9%) that it was headed by the husbands, 5(1.4%) that it was headed by brother/sister and 4(1.2%) of the respondents showed that the household were headed by their fathers.

#### Descriptive statistics for influence of agricultural training on livelihood of women self-help group

For analysis, frequency and percentages ratings of response for each item were examined and summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Agricultural training on livelihood of women self-help group

Statement on agricultural training				D	D	U	A	SA
Entrepreneurial Knowledge gained improves mean annual savings of the members of women self-help group's	F	34	24	48	119	121		
	%	9.8	6.9	13	34.4	35.0		
Increased number of technical trainings on operation and management enables women self-help group members to increase annual net income	F	23	46	32	118	127		
	%	6.6	13	9.2	34.1	36.7		
Increased capacity building through rights enhancement increases the number of women self-help group's members	F	4	12	45	110	175		
	%	1.2	3.5	13	31.8	50.6		
Improved field extension services improves knowledge of self-help group members, attracts the more women to join women self-help groups	F	7	26	9	161	143		
	%	2.0	7.5	2.6	46.5	41.3		

### **Source (Researcher, 2016)**

Table 2 shows that 121(35.0%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement that entrepreneurial knowledge gained improved mean annual savings of the members of women self-help groups, 119(34.4%) respondents agreed, 48(13.9%) respondents were undecided, 34(9.8%) strongly disagreed and 24(6.9%) respondents disagreed with the statement. The study findings suggested that the most 240(69.4%) of the respondents opined that entrepreneurial Knowledge gained improved mean annual savings of the members of women self-help groups. This is in agreement with the findings of [10] that entrepreneurial knowledge gained improved mean annual savings of the members of women self-help groups. That is through these groups, women farmers gained more opportunities to work together, share their experiences, express their opinions and also train new groups. This implies that when the women self-help group gain entrepreneurial knowledge on savings, the annual mean saving will increase, thus, improved livelihood of women self-help groups.

Similarly, 127(36.7%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement that technical trainings on operation and management enabled women self-help group members to increase annual net income, 118(34.1%) respondents agreed, 46(13.3%) respondents disagreed, 32(9.2%) respondents were undecided and 23(6.6%) respondents disagreed with the statement. It emerged from the study that most 245(70.8%) the respondents believed that technical trainings on operation and management enabled women self-help group members to increase annual net income Technical trainings on operation and management enabled women self-help group members to increase annual net income [11]. This implies that increased technical training on operation and management of farm machines enables women self-help group members to increases their annual net income, thus, improved livelihood. In addition, 175(50.6%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement that capacity building through rights enhancement increased the number of women self-help group's members, 110(31.8%) respondents agreed, 45(13.0%) respondents were undecided, 12(3.5%) respondents disagreed and 4(1.2%) were in a strong disagreement with the statement. The study findings suggested that majority 285(82.4%) respondents believed that capacity building through rights enhancement increased the number of women self-help group's members. This is in agreement with the findings of [4] and [11]. SHGs helps in capacity building, training, and participatory approach in the planning of self-employment ventures. Besides, underscored the importance of group cohesiveness among the women self-help groups in loan repayments, resolving group conflicts, participate in group activities and promote group leadership. This implies that for improved livelihood of self-help groups, capacity building through awareness on rights should be employed as these results into increased number of women joining women self-help group. Lastly, 161(46.5%) respondents agreed with the statement that the field extension services improved knowledge of self-help group members, attracted more women to join women self-help groups, 143(41.3%) respondents strongly agreed, 26(7.5%) respondents disagreed, 9(2.6%) respondents were undecided and 7(2.0%) respondents had a strong disagreement with the statement. The study findings suggested that most 304(87.8%) respondents opined that field extension services improved knowledge of self-help group members, attracted more women to join women self-help groups. This is in agreement with the findings of Sorre (2010) that in Kenya, women and men have been trained on new agricultural technologies and agri-business development. However, the majority of women have been satisfied with these extension services and their earnings from agriculture activities have increased by 35%. This implies that for improved livelihood of self-help groups, there should be field extension services conducted to improve their knowledge,

thus, attraction of more women to join women self-help groups. These descriptive statistics analysis of objective three was followed by a Spearman Rank Order Correlation test to determine the relationship between agricultural training and livelihood of women self-help groups. This was analyzed under the following sub-section.

#### 4.6.2. Spearman Rank Order Correlation test for relationship between agricultural training and livelihood of women self-help group

The Spearman rank Correlation test at  $p \leq 0.05$  significance level illustrating statistically significant relationship between agricultural training and livelihood of women self-help group are as summarized in Table 4.8. To achieve this, the hypothesis below was tested;

**Table 3:** Relationship between agricultural training and livelihood of women self-help groups

Correlations			
		Livelihood of women self-help group	Agricultural training
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
	N	346	
	Correlation Coefficient	.688**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	346	346

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

#### Source (Researcher, 2016)

Table 4.8 shows a strong positive relationship ( $r = .688$ ;  $p = .000$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between agricultural training and livelihood of women self-help group. Therefore “there is statistically significant relationship between agricultural training and livelihood of women self-help group in Kapseret Constituency in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya”.

#### 4. Conclusion

For the agricultural trainings, the study concludes that increased entrepreneurial Knowledge gained, increased technical trainings on operation and management, increased capacity building and increased field extension services leads to increased annual savings, net income and the number of members joining the women group, thus improved livelihood of women self-help groups. The government, policy makers and other stakeholders should ensure that all women join women self-help groups so that they acquire trainings such as field extension

services, technical support, capacity building and entrepreneurship as this will improve their knowledge, hence, enhanced livelihood.

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## 5. Appendices

### Appendices I: Questionnaire

#### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Please tick (✓) all that apply

i. What is your level of education?

Primary ( ) Secondary ( ) Tertiary ( ) University ( )

ii. What is your age bracket?

18-28 ( ) 29-38 ( ) 39-58 ( ) above 58 years ( )

iii. What is your religion?

None ( ) Protestant ( ) Catholic ( ) Muslim ( )

iv. Who is the head of the family?

Husband ( ) Wife ( ) Father ( ) Mother ( ) Brother/Sister ( )

#### SECTION B: AGRICULTURAL TRAINING AND WOMEN SELF HELP GROUP LIVELIHOOD

Please circle the number that represents your level of agreements with each of the following statements using the scale provided: **1=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4=Agree and 5= Strongly Agree**

**Table 4**

Statements					
Entrepreneurial Knowledge gained improves mean annual savings of the members of women self-help group's	1	2	3	4	5
Increased number of technical trainings on operation and management enables women self-help group members to increase annual net income	1	2	3	4	5
Increased capacity building through rights enhancement increases the number of women self-help group's members	1	2	3	4	5
Improved field extension services improves knowledge of self-help group members, attracts the more women to join women self-help groups	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION C: WOMEN SELF HELP GROUP LIVELIHOOD

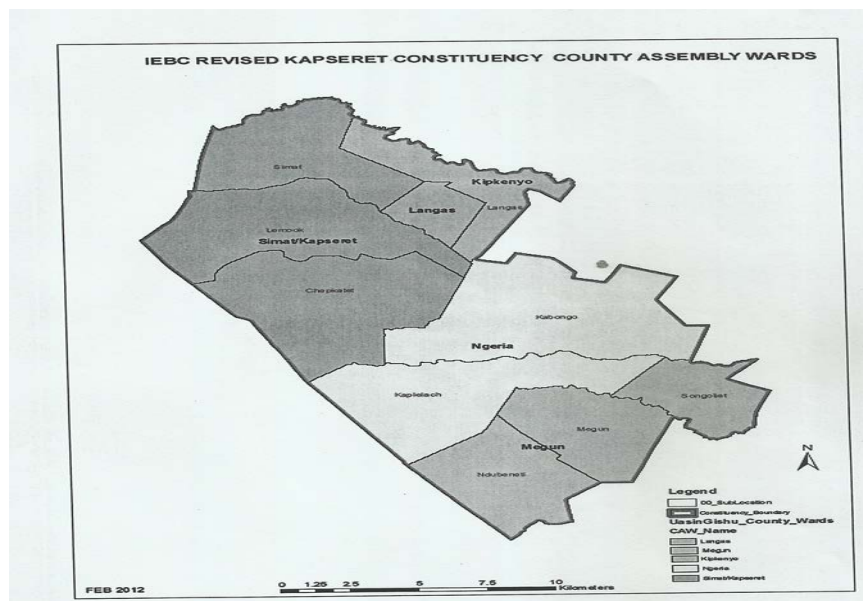
Please circle the number that represents your level of agreements with each of the following statements using the scale provided: **1=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4=Agree and 5= Strongly Agree**

**Table 5**

Statements					
The number of women self-help group's members has increased as a result of agricultural practices	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Women self-help group's asset structure has improved as a result of agricultural practices	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Women self-help group's mean annual saving has increased as a result of agricultural practices	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Women self-help group's annual net income has increased as a result of agricultural practices					

Appendix II: Study area map

**Appendix II: Study area map**



**Figure 1**